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Viewing cable 06DAMASCUS3836, AMR MOUSSA EXPECTED IN DAMASCUS, SAUDI AMBASSADOR

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Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#06DAMASCUS3836**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
06DAMASCUS3836	2006-08-03 14:58	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Damascus

Appears in these articles:

[not](#)
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VZCZCXRO9633
OO RUEHAG
DE RUEHDM #3836/01 2151458
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 031458Z AUG 06
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0778
INFO RUEHXK/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD PRIORITY 0164
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 DAMASCUS 003836

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/03/2016

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SUBJECT: AMR MOUSSA EXPECTED IN DAMASCUS, SAUDI AMBASSADOR

RECALLED

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Michael H. Corbin for reasons 1.4 b/d

¶11. (C) Summary: During a July 30 visit to Damascus, Egypt's FM met with Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, repeating Egyptian demands from an earlier visit after the outbreak of the Israel-Hizballah conflict that Syria publicly and privately push Hizballah to return Israeli soldiers and cease fighting, according to an Egyptian diplomat in Damascus. Asad refused, noting that the SARG did not control Hizballah "like a light switch" and would appear weak to the Syrian and Arab public if it called for an end to the "resistance," according to the diplomat. As a result, official and private Syria-Egypt relations have cooled to the degree that protesters in front of the Egyptian Embassy last week called Egyptian President Mubarak a "lowly real estate broker who deserved to be dumped." Similarly, the Syrian public and the regime have lashed out at Saudi Arabia for criticizing the Hizballah actions that initiated the current conflict, leading to the Saudi ambassador's recall earlier this week, the diplomat asserted. Arab League SYG Amr Moussa is expected to arrive August 5 in Damascus, but his message remains unclear, the diplomat asserted. End Summary.

¶12. (C) The July 30 visit of Egypt's FM Ahmed Aboul Gheit to Damascus ended in failure, reinforcing a cooling in Syrian-Egyptian relations here, according to an Egyptian diplomat to Syria. Aboul Gheit met with Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, repeating Egyptian demands from an earlier visit after the outbreak of the Israel-Hizballah conflict that Syria publicly and privately push Hizballah to return Israeli soldiers and cease fighting. Asad responded that the SARG does not control Hizballah "like a light switch" and, in any case, would appear weak to the Syrian and Arab public if it called for an end to the "resistance," according to the diplomat.

¶13. (C) Relations between the Egyptian and Syrian public have also cooled, according to the diplomat, citing a Syrian protest in front of the Egyptian Embassy last week, in which demonstrators suggested that Egyptian President Mubarak was a "lowly real estate broker who deserved to be dumped." Similarly, the Syrian public and the regime (somewhat more obliquely) have also lashed out at Saudi Arabia for criticizing Hizballah for starting the current conflict, leading to the Saudi ambassador's recall earlier this week "at least for a period of consultations," the diplomat asserted.

¶14. (C) So far, the victors of the current conflict are Hizballah, the SARG and Iran, the diplomat asserted. There have been no drawbacks for the regime, said the diplomat, speculating that the SARG may have known about Hizballah's plans to kidnap the soldiers at least a day or two before it happened. The longer the crisis continues, the more volatile the situation becomes, according to the diplomat, who made his comments during a lunch attended by representatives from other embassies. A Serbian diplomat agreed, speculating that the longer the crisis continues, the more likely Iran will seek to inflame the situation further, possibly triggering an escalation that would involve Israeli-Syrian hostilities, to delay compliance with UNSCR 1696's August 31 deadline.

¶15. (C) Arab League SYG Amr Moussa is expected to arrive August 5 in Damascus, but the content and tone of his message remains unclear, particularly as Arab countries are divided in their response to the conflict, the Egyptian diplomat asserted.

¶16. (C) The diplomat recounted how the Egyptian Embassy has been consumed for weeks with the evacuation of 15,000 Egyptians fleeing from Lebanon across the border into Syria. The diplomat described how he and his colleagues faced Egyptian demonstrations in the Damascus airport after the first days of the crisis until airlifts were organized through a series of increasingly urgent calls from the Egyptian Ambassador to President Mubarak's office. Even

after airlifts began, Egyptian citizens complained bitterly about Egyptian Embassy support and caused countless embarrassments, said the diplomat, citing as an example the theft of baby food from aid stations set up in the airport by the German Embassy for their evacuees. Although the number of Egyptians seeking evacuation assistance at the Egyptian Embassy here has now slowed significantly from the initial exodus of 3,000 persons per day, the consular section is now confronted with long lines of Lebanese seeking Egyptian visas, some whom have significant influence, including female

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Lebanese pop stars, the diplomat said.
CORBIN